

**Remarks**

5 The drawings are objected to. The declaration is objected to. Claim 6 is objected to due to informalities. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakura (US 6,122,684) in view of Haba (US 6,648,226 B2).

1. Objection to the drawings:

10 The drawings are objected to because they do not lend themselves to assist in the understanding of the disclosure.

**Response:**

15 As indicated in the AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS section above, each of the Figures for this application has been amended to provide a clearer illustration of the disclosure. Acceptance of the drawings is requested.

2. Objection to the declaration:

20 The Declaration is objected to because the declaration appears application is attempted to claim foreign priority under 35 USC 119(a)-(d) but the declaration fails to clearly state this.

25 **Response:**

30 The original declaration and power of attorney for the instant application are attached. The applicant believes that the declaration clearly states the foreign priority claimed under 35 USC 119(a)-(d). Acceptance of the declaration is requested.

3. Objection to claim 6:

Claim 6 is objected to because of the following informalities: misspelling an "offeeding" (see claim 6 line 2). Appropriate correction is required.

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**Response:**

Claim 6 has been amended to correct the informality. The corrected wording now reads, "of feeding".

10 4. Rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakura (US 6,122,684) in view of Haba (US 6,648,226 B2) for reasons of record, as recited on pages 2-4 of the above-indicated Office action.

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**Response:**

Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to better distinguish the present invention from the prior art. Claims 1 and 6 now each contain limitations previously found in claim 4, and claim 4 has been cancelled. In particular, claims 1 and 6 describe a sort code that is used by an application in a computer system to sort image files produced by a plurality of scanners. The sort code arranges the sequence of the image files generated by the scanners according to the start times of the scan jobs performed on the scanners. In other words, the image files will be sorted in the same order as the order in which the scanners start to scan the documents.

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Sakura (6,122,684), on the other hand, teaches in col.5, lines 26-44 and in Fig.3 and Fig.4 that a user specifies the re-arranging order of images created by the plurality

of scanners used to scan documents. As illustrated in Fig.4, the user specifies the exact order in which images are to be arranged. Sakura does not teach or suggest that the images should be arranged based on the starting time of the scan jobs performed by the scanners. By having the user specify the re-arranging order of the image files, the order will be maintained irrespective of which scanner begins scanning first.

Haba also does not teach or suggest sorting image files based on the starting time of scan jobs performed by a plurality of scanners. Therefore, the currently amended claims 1 and 6 are not unpatentable over Sakura and Haba.

Claims 2 and 7 have been amended to correct grammar errors. Claims 2 and 3 are dependent on claim 1 and should be allowed if claim 1 is allowed. Claim 7 is dependent on claim 6 and should be allowed if claim 6 is allowed. Reconsideration of claims 1-3 and 6-7 is respectfully requested.

5. Introduction to new claims 8-14:

Claim 8 is written based off of the limitations of the original claims 1 and 5. Claim 8 states that the sort code sorts the image files generated by a plurality of scanners based on a scan job number assigned by the corresponding scanner and also based on the priority of the corresponding scanner. This method is described in paragraphs [0021] and [0022] of the specification and in Fig.3. In short, two criteria are used to sort the image files generated by the scanners. First, a scanner used to scan a set of documents assigns a scan job number to the set of documents. For each

scanner, a first set of documents scanned would have a scan  
job number of 1, a second set would have a scan job number  
of 2, and so on. Thus, each of the scanners used to scan  
documents would assign a scan job number of 1 to the first  
5 set of documents scanned.

In addition, different scanners have different  
priority levels. Therefore, when two or more scanners each  
produce image files having the same scan job number, the  
10 priority of the corresponding scanners is used to determine  
the sorting order of the image files.

Claim 8 simply states that the image files are sorted  
according to the scan job number and according to the  
15 priority of the scanners. Claim 9 is written to state that  
the image files are first sorted according to the scan job  
number and then according to the priority of the scanners.

Neither Sakura nor Haba teach sorting image files based  
20 on scan job numbers or priority of the scanners. Therefore  
claim 8 is patentable over the combination of Sakura and  
Haba. Claims 10 and 11 are duplicates of claims 2 and 3.

Claim 12 is written to incorporate the limitations of  
25 the original claims 6 and 5, and describes sorting  
according to the scan job numbers and the priority of  
scanners. Claim 13 is written to further limit the sorting  
method. Claim 14 is a duplicate of claim 7. Acceptance of  
new claims 8-14 is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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